3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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At Work and Play

Making an excellent bow string was a task for a specialist. The bow string was made of the sinew of the buffalo bull or deer, derived from the tendon which lies along either side of the spine from the shoulder blades to the hip bones. The tendon was shredded or subdivided longitudinally into fine threads of fiber. It has been estimated that each sinew had then ten times the strength of ordinary cotton thread of equal size. These sinews or threads were next soaked in glue water, and, while damp, several were twisted to form a strong, perfectly round cord of the same size and tension from end to end, and the ends knotted. Post Oak Jim said that he preferred bow strings made of horse-tail hair because "they didn't break and were not spoiled by moisture." Still, he thought bear gut was the best material of all.[8]

Arrows, next to the bow, were the most precious possessions of a Comanche. Much time was devoted to searching for arrows that had been shot. They were too hard to obtain and cost too much effort to be wasted. This was also true of points lost from the arrow shafts. Nevertheless, it is asserted on good authority that Comanches would never retrieve an arrow which had taken a human life, enemy or friend.[9] Great skill, patience, and judgment were required to make a perfect arrow. The old men who made the best arrows were highly respected for their special skill. Although there was a great difference in arrows, the proportions between the shaft, head, and feathers were quite definite. If these proportions were maintained, the arrow performed efficient and effective work in the hands of an expert bowman; otherwise, it was a failure. An arrow too light in the shaft would not fly steadily; one too heavy would not carry its force long enough. When a good, well-balanced arrow struck the mark, the feather end tilted upward. "The Cheyennes, Pawnees, and Pueblos don't know

[8] This description of bow-making is compiled from statements by informants Kills Something and Post Oak Jim; also, R. I. Dodge, *The Plains of the Great West*, 348–49; Carter, *On the Border with MacKenzie*, 295–96; Fannie M. Hughs, *Legends of Texas Rivers*, 219; Marcy, *Adventure on Red River*, 160; Anon., "Indian Bow and Arrow," *Frontier Times*, Vol. VIII (December, 1930), 141; Lehmann, *op. cit.*, 94; Gregg, *op. cit.*, 412; Wissler, *North American Indians of the Plains*, 25–27; Grinnell, *The Cheyenne Indians*, I, 174; Garretson, *op. cit.*, 178–79; Babb, *op. cit.*, 134; also, oral communication of others to Wallace.

[9] Lehmann, *op. cit.*, 46.

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4. 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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what might come. He was not arrogant toward the helping powers—far from it—he was grateful for the help they could extend to him. He knew that he could not well do without that help, but was confident that it was forthcoming. The spirits were beneficent. They gave of their power, not in compassion but in altruism.

The regular pattern called for the candidate to remain at his solitary watch for four days and nights, but the quest might be prolonged. He remained until he received a vision, or else abandoned the quest to try again at a later time when conditions were more propitious. The vigil was completed with a vision or hallucination which made known to the candidate his personal and individual magic medium, the mysterious bond between him and that supernatural power which would henceforth act as the helping guardian of his destiny. A wind rustling through a pass or the timber, the bark of a dog, the howl of a wolf, the scream of an eagle might end the quest and send the candidate home to offer thanks to his newly found guardian spirit.

The newly acquired guardian spoke and understood the language of his ward and possessed special attributes or powers which it could transfer. On the fourth night of his search, Yellowfish heard a voice as distinctly, he vows, as if some person were standing near and speaking to him. "Tomorrow morning go take a bath in the creek below, and then go towards the east until you see a one-year-old buffalo coming across a ravine." He followed the instructions minutely and met the one-year-old buffalo crossing the ravine. Thereafter Yellowfish possessed the medicine of the one-year-old buffalo.[3]

During the revelation, the guardian spirit emphasized certain tabus and procedures which his ward must carefully follow; otherwise the medicine either would not work or would cause evil. Medicine is power, and power is not to be handled casually. Among tabus commonly noted was one in connection with medicine men's eating certain foods, or at least eating them only under certain conditions. Should anyone walk behind a medicine man while he was eating, he was certain to become ill or lose his power, unless he had "heap big medicine."[4] All medicines had to be protected from grease and the ill effects of menstruating women. Eagle medicine men could not per-

[3] Informant: Yellowfish.
[4] Informant: Medicine Woman.

3:Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945)1952
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mit anyone to pass behind them while they were eating because an eagle is upset by such an act. Post Oak Jim, in explaining this, said that he once had two captive eagles who took to eating back to back so as to prevent this possibility.

The newly gained power was generally referred to as "making medicine." The identification of certain powers was a life-and-death secret. Without the consent of this power, the possessor could not talk about it. The possession of power entailed serious responsibility, lest it cause harm rather than good. The owner must have faith, otherwise his power might not work. Practically every power carried with it one or more songs which the possessor had to learn and which were usually revealed during the visions. The possessor of strong medicine could, therefore, have quite a number of songs which he had to be able to sing at all times. It was not unusual in a Comanche camp to see a medicine man go out from his tipi after the evening meal, lie flat on his back, and to the music or time of a rattle sing his songs over and over again.

By association, medicines were usually similar in some respects to notable qualities possessed by the prototype of the bestowing guardian spirit. Therefore, the medicine bag which contained the material substance that served as a medium for consultation with the guardian spirit was likely to contain a great variety of objects identified with its source of the power. Among its contents might be a handful of sweet grass, certain herbs, a deer's tail, a bird's claw, small stones, the gristle of a bear snout, the dried maw of a buffalo, the skins of certain animals, particularly the buffalo, bear, or otter, plumes of certain birds, beaver oil, a smooth, round, hard ball sometimes found in the stomach of a buffalo, and so on without end. Each had a use; the sweet grass was protective; the herbs possessed healing power; the bird's claws inspired dash and courage; the stones brought health and long life since they do not wear out; the small ball from the buffalo's stomach, which this animal was believed to have swallowed, not only added great strength to its possessor but rendered him invincible in battle. These stones were reported to have been as much as three inches in diameter.[5]

[5] Battey, *op. cit.*, 332–33; Burnet, "American Aborigines, Indians of Texas," *loc. cit.*, Vol. I (May 22, 1824), 162.

3:Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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cigarettes, which were rolled in various materials. One of the favorites is the soft, inner leaves of the corn shuck or the leaves of the blackjack oak. They rarely smoked cigars, and according to most accounts, tobacco chewing was not adopted until reservation days. Although smoking was done in various ways, ceremonial smoking was customarily done with pipes. There were common pipes for general use, council pipes for state occasions, a specially dedicated peace pipe, a special pipe used by the old men in the Smoke Lodge, and a most sacred medicine pipe for solemn religious ritual. Etiquette forbade the use of special pipes for any purpose other than that for which they were intended. To touch the consecrated medicine pipe to profane lips would have amounted to sacrilege so profound as to bring on a general catastrophe. However, in the absence of a special pipe, another was substituted, or cigarettes might serve the purpose. Each ceremony required its own special ritual in handling the pipe.

When a group engaged in ceremonial smoking, they ordinarily seated themselves in a circle or a semicircle. The opening was toward the east. If within a lodge, they sat around it in a semicircle facing the door, which was usually on the east. On most occasions, the women withdrew when the pipe was introduced. The fire tender, when present, sat just to the right as one entered the opening of the circle or door. Opposite the opening was the medicine man or leader of the ceremony. When the time for offering the invocation to the supernatural powers arrived, the leader ordered the fire built up. He then filled the pipe. The next step was the invocation. Holding the pipe with stem pointed to the sky, he made offering to the sky, then to the ground, then to the four points of the compass in order. This done, a pinch of tobacco was taken from the bowl and laid upon or buried in the ground as an offering to Mother Earth. Then the pipe was lighted, and the leader blew the first puff of smoke toward the sky, then to Mother Earth, to the four directions, and afterwards to his guardian spirit or whatever supernatural power he desired to propitiate. While the lighting of the pipe was in process, there was a tabu on spoken words. Absolute silence prevailed. If at any stage of the ceremony the silence was broken, it was necessary to dump all the tobacco from the pipe on the ground and begin anew. On some occasions the silence prevailed until the pipe had completed the round;

7: Richardson D-4 (no date) 1929
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411 steel, about two feet and a half long and an inch wide, tapering to a point, fixed into a slender handle of bois d'arc, the whole weapon being about seven feet in length.

714 The Comanche shields were described as being circular in form,
411 about two feet in diameter, and made of wicker work covered with two thicknesses of Buffalo hide. Between the coverings of buffalo hide was a padding of hair about an inch thick. With the advent of the rifle the Indians probably reinforced their shields. At any rate the tough buffalo hide covering, turned flesh side out and polished as much as possible, would turn a rifle ball unless it struck it perpendicular to the surface.

411 Long after they had become acquainted with metal implements the Comanches continued to use a war club made by binding a withe around a hard stone of about two pounds in weight. A groove around the stone helped to keep it in place. The handle was about fourteen inches long. No doubt the Indians often put this stone to various uses such as driving stakes.

771 Very little is known about the religion of the wild Comanches.
776 Their religious conceptions were evidently vague and they had comparatively few well established customs of religious meaning. One observer credits them with acknowledging a supreme ruler and director, whom they called the great spirit, and with worshipping the sun as the great cause of life and the earth as the receptacle and producer of all that sustains life.[23] It may well be doubted that they had any conception of a single "Great Spirit," but their veneration for the sun and earth can not be doubted. When game was brought down on a hunt the carcass was immediately prepared and cooked, but no matter how hungry the Indian might be, not a
[783] bite was eaten until the chief or leader had cut off a morsel and buried it. Similarly when the chief lit his pipe the first puff of smoke was blown toward the sun and the second to the earth.[24]

● 784 Naturally these savages had many taboos. One or two of these may be mentioned as illustrative, for they were sometimes matters of great consequence. In 1787, the Spanish in New Mexico tried a colonization experiment with the Comanches and spent a consider-

23. Parker, Notes Taken with Marcy, 231.
24. See Noah Smithwick, The Evolution of a State, 180. Ceremonies preceding the meal similar to this were common among the plains tribes. See Hodge, I, 455.

7: Richardson D-4 (no date) 1929
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able sum of money building on the Arkansas a village for a certain band to move into. The Indians moved in, and all went well, until the wife of a prominent chief died and the whole band immediately moved out and sought a new location a great way off. The Spanish officer who reported this unfortunate occurrence explained that these Indians had many superstitions, one being that when any prominent person died the camp should be abandoned and the place henceforth avoided.[25] We have the account of a similar occurrence which happened many years later when the son of chief Pah-hau-ca, of the Southern Comanches, died or was killed and the chief abandoned his camp and chattels and moved far north to a new camp.[26] The Comanches would fight desperately to rescue the body of a fallen comrade so long as the scalp was intact; but the moment this was removed they would abandon the body and would not even touch it to bury it. According to some accounts they also held the heart of an animal in veneration and generally avoided touching it when dressing a carcass.[27]

In literature and art the attainments of the Comanches were slight. They had no system of writing other than that of crude pictures and these commonly pertained to wars and the chase. On skins carefully dressed, they often drew designs, a common one being the sun in the center with different colored rays of light radiating out in finely drawn lines. Their shields were generally adorned with pictures and it may be that they, like their allies the Kiowas, had a system of Heraldry.[28] Their paint was made from colored chalks or clay and their brushes from tufts of hair. For drawings of a more temporary character charcoal often served as the pencil and any smooth surface like bone, a board, or the bark of a tree served for canvas.[29]

They had a system of enumeration, but apparently little or no knowledge of the rudiments of arithmetic. The moon periods served as time units; but it does not seem that they had a calendar of any kind, other than the knowledge of the four seasons. They

25. Ugarte y Loyola to Don Fernando de la Concha, July 22, 1788, enclosing copies of reports made by the officers in New Mexico. Ms. Provincias Internas, Mexico City, Tomo 65, University of Texas Transcripts.

26. Statement of Luis Sanches, interpreter, May 1844; Ms. Texas Indian Papers, Texas State Library, Austin.

27. Smithwick, The Evolution of a State, 181.

28. See Mooney, Kiowa Calendar, 230.

29. Smithwick, The Evolution of a State, 180-181; Dr. Ferdinand Roemer, Texas (Bonn, 1849) 293 ff.

23: Cabello y Robles G-3 (1778-1786) 1961
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Eastern Comanche

(ca. 1786)

nor of Texas a number of questions about this tribe. A translation of Governor's Cabello's reply follows:

Domingo Cabello: "Answers that the Governor of the Province of Texas Gave to the Questions that the Señor Commandant-General of the Interior [Provinces] asked in a letter dated January 27, 1786, about various circumstances of the Eastern Comanche Indians," April 30, 1786, Bexar Archives.

FIRST: About Their Customs.

According to what is known about this Nation, it is the most brave and warlike of those [tribes] that inhabit the North; and when they have friendship they are very friendly and of a generous mood, and friends of their friends, although delicate in the mode with which they make friendship. They adore very much the skins of animals which they customarily bring with them, and which they fasten on themselves during the encounters of war, so that they will not be killed or wounded in any manner; and if any misfortune befall them, they attribute it to having given some offense to this specie of idol, such as not having offered it food or the smoke (*humo*) of tobacco each time they smoke (*fuman*), or that women have defiled the ceremonies which they make use of when they take the pipe in hand. Some devote themselves in this manner to adoring a buffalo hide, others to that of the bear, others to the otter, and others to that of some birds, whose skin, still with its feathers, they use to adorn themselves. Their marriages they celebrate with as many women as they are able to maintain; if someone distinguishes himself in bravery and in actions made against his enemies, or something of a similar nature, some fathers give him even of their daughters, and it is the custom many times for him to marry with the sisters [of his wife]; husbands maintain their women with the buffalo and deer which they hunt; [the women] are obliged to work the meat and [prepare] the hides of the said animals. [The husbands] are so extremely jealous that for very trifling motives they kill their women; furthermore, when these mild ones give occasion for it, the husbands treat them with much blindness and harshness, as if they were slaves.

29: Hoebel E-4,5 (1933) 1969 N06 Comanche N06

to several violent privilege-rights. A married woman could be wholly at the mercy of her husband's whim. He was free to extort from her a confession, as well as the name of her lover, by use of the cruelest third-degree methods. He either choked her until she gasped out the required information, or he took her out to a spot some distance from the camp where he built a fire over which he slowly lowered his terrorized wife until she gave him the information he wanted.

More refined men put the matter in the hands of the Sun and Earth. They took their wives to a lonely spot for *taβ βekat*, "sun killing." The suspecting husband filled his ceremonial pipe and smoked to the great powers, addressing first the sun. "You, Father, know the truth of this matter. As you look down upon them don't let them live until fall." Then to the Earth he said, "You, Mother Earth, as you know what is true, don't let them live a happy life on you."

Thereupon the wife smoked the pipe and avowed her innocence with an appeal to the Sun and Earth to kill her if she lied. Comanche dogma has it, and supporting cases are offered, that when women made this ritual conditioned curse, the Sun knew if they were guilty, and it killed them. Its penalty for perjury was death.[6]

Women, for their part, had no demand-rights against their husbands that they be faithful in marriage; they could exact no penalties from them. Hence, they had no opportunities to put their husbands to the test. But in recent decades some did turn the tables by demanding of the Sun and Earth, when they took the oath, that the powers kill the husband if the wife were innocent of the act.

Finally, it should be noted that when the issue was put to the Sun and Earth, no legal action against the corespondent followed. The death of the wife ended the matter.

On the other hand, the collecting of damages from the offending male did not necessarily absolve the wife. If her absconder was strong enough, she had a good chance of escaping her husband's ire. But she ran terrible risks. In seven of forty-five Comanche adultery and wife-absconding cases the women were slain by their husbands—one in seven! Three of these were adulteresses; four were absconders. Of the twenty other adulteresses five were mutilated by their husbands; four had their noses cut off, and one had the soles of her feet slashed so she could not walk.

One may wonder that any Comanche woman played the game against such odds. We see it as additional evidence that mere severity of the law is not enough by itself to make people behave.

The Comanche law of murder was most simple. For a Comanche husband to kill his wife—with or without good cause—was not murder.

[6] Hoebel, *Political Organization and Law-ways*, pp. 90-91.

29: Hoebel E-4,5 ^(1933) ^1969 NO6 Comanche NO6

682 It was an absolute privilege-right, which not even her family would move
[593] to challenge.

On the other hand, for one Comanche male to kill another was never
682 a privilege-right, even when applying force to an over-stubborn defendant.
627 Any willful killing required a revenge killing of the slayer. Here was the fatal weakness of Comanche law, as indeed of so much primitive law. The culture provided right ways of procedure and defined the substance of
602 tortious acts. But the primacy of the kin group came to the fore whenever
682 a prosecutor felt he had pushed negotiation as far as it would carry and
627 then had taken recourse to arms. The kin of the defendant whom he had killed did not accept the killing, although general public opinion may have held that the victim had it coming to him. The Comanche kinsmen took revenge on the prosecutor regardless of the rightness of his original grievance. In enforcing the law he lost his life, a victim of *lex talionis*.

However much Comanche law fell short in this respect, custom
[518] remedied the defect in another. Blood-revenge killing was only of the first killer and retaliation did not lead to feud. The kinship principle, while extant, was nevertheless weak among the Comanches, and general fighting within the tribe was not to be countenanced when there were always outside enemies to be confronted. The killer, and the killer alone, had to die. There it stopped. No religious sanction, no tribal authority, was necessary to suppress the feuding tendency. Custom was sufficient restraint, and in this the Comanches were fortunate, for thereby they escaped the self-renewing curse that plagues so many primitive law systems.

Willful killing of a man's favorite horse was an act akin to murder,
685 especially if the horse had been bequeathed to him by a best friend. Re-
627 taliation was taken not in killing the favorite horse of the transgressor but
[825] in slaying the transgressor himself. A favorite horse had a legal personality and was equated with a human being. Consequently, no further blood revenge followed, for things were already equal: a man for a horse.

Every Comanche male at one time or another went on a vision quest
787 in search of power. He did not abase himself before the supernatural spirits or masochistically mutilate and torture himself to arouse their compassion.
776 Nor did he weep before them to arouse their pity. Unlike the tribesmen
789 of the Plains to the north, he assumed that the spirits were generally benign toward him; they needed no coaxing to share the benefits of their power with him. If he fasted and waited in a lonely place, they would help him.
776 Nor did they interfere in his daily living except as they put conditions on the use of the power they gave him. A Comanche had to observe no super-
784 natural tabus save those that went with his own personal medicine. Under
756 Postulate VIII[A] most Comanche medicine men used their powers to help
789 the people. They cured and used their medicine to bring success in war and the hunt. They even, for a contractual consideration, helped others

A [See category 181, p. 69--Analyst]

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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After Sanapia had taken the coal and covered her hands with the ashes, her mother began the transmission of supernatural power to Sanapia's mouth. Two eagle feathers, manipulated by the mother, were drawn across Sanapia's opened mouth four times; however, in the course of the fourth movement of the feathers, one of the feathers disappeared. At this occurrence Sanapia's mother told her that the eagle feather had entered her mouth and would dwell there for the rest of her life. 115 159 756 789

As with a similar phenomenon occurring in a variety of witchcraft which will be discussed in Chapter 5, Sanapia states that she does not believe that an eagle feather actually was inserted into her mouth but rather that the idea, the essence, or the Medicine which the eagle feather symbolized, was the entity which was placed in her mouth. She does not attempt to explain the disappearance of the second feather from her mother's hand except to suggest that her mother possessed certain powers which she did not transmit to Sanapia. This first phase was ended with the mother's application of red paint to Sanapia's face, forearms, and legs, from the knees to, and including, the soles of the feet.

Two tabus, or "rules" as Sanapia calls them, were attached by the mother to the powers transmitted in this first phase of the actual transmission. Sanapia was forbidden to eat any kind of fowl. Her mother warned that if she broke that rule, the feather in her throat would kill her. The second tabu forbade Sanapia to allow people to pass behind her carrying food, especially meat, while she is eating. 115 159 756 784 262 264

> That eagle, when he eats, he don't like anybody to be behind him. When its sitting on the ground, and it see anybody behind him, it twist all around and sit toward you. If he back there eating meat, he don't want any meat behind him. If some kid carry meat on a plate, it just give me chills all at once . . . you know, if they be behind me. I don't care if I don't see it, if there's meat on that plate behind me I get chills, and I know someone back there. My mother said, "If you keep it like that and try to take care of yourself, it won't make you loose your ways about it. That's going to be the rule I give you. You got to do that. Don't let anybody go behind you when you eat, especially if they carrying meat."

It is impossible to say if certain kinds of power or specific supernatural abilities to achieve a certain exclusive end were transmitted at each of the four stages of transmission. From Sanapia's discussion it can be said that each stage marked an increase in the degree of power generally. Before the beginning of the actual power transmission Sanapia was taught the ritual procedure which she would require as a doctor. The four stages of transmission acted to instill in her ever-increasing powers to successfully actualize the goals of these doctoring procedures. 115 159 756

An analogy can be made with the construction of an automobile. Before it is actually energized, it is equipped with everything that it will require to efficiently operate. Then, at the source of manufacture, it is carefully observed while given several rigidly controlled and graded performance tests. Supernatural power, like an untested automobile, is potentially dangerous to the operator. This appears to

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115 be the rationale for the transmission of power in stages, each stage being inter-
159 rupted by a certain length of time in which the effects of the preceding stage on
756 the recipient can be observed. Sanapia was not entirely sure how a negative reaction to a transmission of supernatural power would manifest itself. She suggested death or insanity as two possibilities.

For the several months following the first stage of transmission, Sanapia was closely observed by her mother and her maternal uncle, who at this time entered into Sanapia's training program, instructing her in the many medicinal uses of peyote. If any ill effects from the first transmission had occurred in Sanapia, her mother would have immediately terminated Sanapia's program and acted to remove the power which she had given her up to that point. Sanapia's total immersion in running water would have been a core theme of such a desacralizing ritual. Since no negative reactions appeared in Sanapia, her mother initiated the second stage of transmission.

All the power transmission ceremonies are generally similar in that they are based on the blessing ceremony of the eagle doctor, which employs cedar,
[789] eagle feathers, Medicine song, and red paint. The unique feature of the second transmission was the mother's magical insertion of an "eagle egg" into Sanapia's
[825] stomach. An increase in eagle traits indicates an increase in eagle power. To Sanapia the logical pivot of the egg insertion in this second stage of transmission is clear: "Female eagles have eggs inside them." As with the case of the eagle feather in the first transmission ceremony, Sanapia feels that it was the essence or the idea of the egg which entered her. Similarly, she cannot explain how the egg disappeared from her mother's hand prior to the egg's insertion in her stomach.

Tabus

115 The tabu connected with this second power increase forbids Sanapia to
159 eat eggs. It can be seen that each stage of power increase is signaled by the neophyte
756 eagle doctor's acquisition of symbolic elements which are to a great degree inter-
784 twined with the nature of the accompanying tabus. As the power increases, the
262 potential dangers to the *puhakut* increase as his behavior is more tightly bound by tabus, the breaking of which would lead to personal disaster. From Sanapia's accounts, *the puhakuts*, at least of her time, possessed a way to escape the tabu burdens of their powers if they wished. As Sanapia grew older, she began to acquire a craving for eggs. In order to satisfy this hunger, without risking the dangers of breaking her "rule," she commissioned an eagle doctor to extract the egg from her, and thus dismiss the tabu against the consumption of eggs. Of course, by having this done she also lost the quantity of supernatural power which accompanies the eagle egg. It is interesting to note that though the tabu was removed, Sanapia is now physically unable to eat eggs.

> Up to today, I just can't eat eggs. When I eat it I feel like it just set there and it won't go in. I don't know why. I thought I would be able to eat eggs. When I was small my mother won't let me eat eggs because I already had one and she don't want me to eat eggs. But after she pass away and I start eating

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eggs, but it always feel like I'm choking in here and I just quit eating them. And now I can't get the taste out of my mouth. I'll have it all day long. I just can't eat them.

Sanapia's maternal uncle gave her but one "rule." She was forbidden to eat the visceral organs of animals. This was a bitter pill for Sanapia because of her love for liver and an Indian delicacy made from stuffed intestines. She has managed to circumvent this tabu by reinterpreting it. Sanapia feels that if she changes these forbidden meats into something else, disguises them, she can eat them with no fear or guilt.

A *puhakut* cannot doctor himself in the manner which was described regarding the removal of the eagle egg. This is unfortunate for Sanapia, for as she grows older, the tabus which she must observe become increasingly cumbersome; and since she is the only living eagle doctor, she has no way in which to relieve herself of these restrictions. This is also a reason for her disinclination to associate with the less traditionally based members of the Comanche tribe. The more conservative and traditional Comanches recognizing the special limitations which are placed on Sanapia's behavior and, honoring them, make her life a little less complicated. With the less traditionally oriented, Sanapia cannot be sure that they understand the meaning of her tabus, and thus she must be constantly on guard around them lest they pass behind her while she is eating, for example, and unknowingly, or perhaps knowingly, cause her to break one of the many restrictions placed on her with regards to food and behavior. Sanapia states that ignorance is no excuse when a "rule" is broken. Her tabus are mechanical.

The unique feature in the third power transmission was Sanapia's acquisition of her Medicine song. The Medicine song is Sanapia's most direct means of communication to the supernatural realms which are the ultimate sources of her power. The song belonged to both the mother and the uncle. Sanapia considers her Medicine song extremely potent and utilizes it only under the most critical and pressing of doctoring situations. It is not a common element in her doctoring activities but is only employed when she feels that all her other tactics are failing. The song is her ultimate doctoring tool in that it is as close as she comes to actually commanding her power sources to heed her wishes.

The immediate result of her Medicine song is the summoning of the spirits of her mother and uncle. She then asks them for support in her attempts to reach more deeply into the supernaturalistic realms for more power and control over the situation which is challenging her.

When my mother gave me that song she told me, "When you come by yourself like that, when you don't have no place to go for help, when you got no one to lean on for help, sing this song. What you want, you going to get. I'll be listening to you. When you sing this song, I'm going to hear you singing and I'm going to help you."

Two tabus concerned with behavior were associated with the power increase of this third stage. Sanapia was forbidden to ever directly make a request of another. Her powers would, according to her mother, allow her to obtain anything

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she desired simply by wishing for it. Sanapia evades the strictures of this tabu by circumlocutions when her daily routine dictates that she must ask an individual for some object or assistance.

The second "rule" which she acquired at this stage required that she must always be alone when she doctors. Once again, Sanapia views this as a recognition of the potential dangers which excessive supernatural powers possess for humans. The only individuals who could possibly be with her while she doctors are other eagle doctors or persons who Sanapia feels have Medicine which would protect them against the dangers of supernatural contamination.

Kardiner (1945:64) makes a comment relevant at this point when writing on the subject of Comanche notions of power and magic.

> Another interesting point in connection with power, probably unique with the Comanches, is that power might be obtained from the ghosts of medicine men. This was obtained through sleeping by the grave of the medicine man, not moving all night, no matter what terrifying thing happened. The ghost would then transfer the power asked for. Sometimes the sleeper would have a vision; in this the ghost did not come in human form but as a great wind and then a giant bird, which conveyed to him the power that he wanted.

Sanapia's discussion of the later stages of her training agrees with Kardiner's statement in general; however, some major divergences appear. Sanapia, through her Medicine song, is able to summon the spirits of her mother and uncle to her aid. She does not consider their appearance as the apparition of ghosts, however. To Sanapia, ghosts are totally evil entities. Ghosts are also unable to appear in human form since, in her opinion, their human forms decomposed at the place of their interment. Her mother and uncle appear to her looking exactly as they did during the time of her training. When they appear, they do not speak but rather employ hand signs to tell Sanapia that they have come to her aid.

She does not mention a Medicine man's grave as the location of the inevitable struggle with the ghosts, and she definitely does not feel that power is transmitted to her from ghosts. She does agree generally with Kardiner's mention of a "giant bird" as one of her power sources, though she does not believe that the Medicine bird is actually a ghost in another form.

In reiteration, Sanapia states that she received her initial powers through her mother and maternal uncle, and only later in her life was she honored with visitations by the eagle, her patron and guardian spirit. The four days and nights of seclusion and meditation, in her opinion, are in actuality a final test of a new doctor's ability to withstand the attacks of ghosts, and not a time when he is in a position to acquire further powers from a supernatural patron.

Final Test

Sanapia failed her final test. After her mother had explained to her what she could expect during her four-day ordeal, Sanapia was too frightened to go through with the vigil. She would spend the daylight hours sitting on the hill

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 N06 Comanche N06
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The tabus which are attached to supernatural power are a major reason that a doctor may experience difficulty in his attempt to find a successor. Wallace and Hoebel (1952:165) mention this in their discussion of Comanche supernaturalism:

> Such reluctance to assume power, or particular powers, was common among the Comanches. Powers were always accompanied by tabus; tabus were onerous restrictions on the freedom of action that a Comanche male cherished. The result was an ambivalent attitude toward the possession of Medicine.

Sanapia, being aware of this, is planning to delete certain tabus from her Medicine way in order to make the acquisition of her powers more palatable to a twentieth-century Comanche. Of course, the absence of certain tabus also indicates the absence of the concomitant degree of power. Her successor will not be burdened with the food and eating tabus which Sanapia finds so cumbersome. He will also not have to be bothered with the tabu forbidding the making of direct requests. These deletions are major concessions for Sanapia, but ones which she feels are necessary if her tradition is to continue.

Sanapia's mother modified her Medicine way before transmitting it to Sanapia for much the same reasons that Sanapia is now being compelled to consider. An element which occurred in her mother's modifications, though not in Sanapia's, was the deletion of certain powers because of their lack of contemporary function. Her mother possessed many medicines and songs which were associated with the role of midwife. She told Sanapia that the delivering of infants would be taken over by white doctors in the future and, therefore, there was no reason for Sanapia to learn the skill or to be compelled to observe the tabus associated with it. To both Sanapia and her mother the primary function of an eagle doctor is his ability to cure ghost sickness[2]. The deletions in tabus and power made by Sanapia and her mother have not infringed on this specific power.

Sanapia believes that her doctoring tradition will ultimately die as the Comanches become more acculturated. She states that *puhakuts* will cease to exist when the Comanches have no more need for them. Sanapia's sensitivity, concern with function, and general pragmatic instincts make her a very sensitive barometer of the manner in which culture change is viewed and handled by a traditionally oriented Comanche. Since her opinion of herself is bound by supernatural sanctions, and not merely by elusive value structure, her reaction to culture change is much more dramatic.

Attitudes about Sanapia

The ways in which Comanches of both northern and southern affiliation and members of neighboring tribes react to Sanapia as a personality are many and

[2] "Ghost sickness," "twisted face," and "crooked mouth" are names which the Comanches, as well as other southern Plains tribes, give to a condition of facial hemiplegia, usually with concomitantly occurring constrictions of the hands and arms, which is said to result from ghost contact.